

Dear Inspectorate Team

Hullavington Parish Council has been paying close attention to the discussion regarding the impact of traffic on the Norton Road at the end of The Street in Hullavington, going towards Bradfield Cottages. Having listened to the comments being made at the recent hearing, we felt we had to say more about the suggestions being made at the hearing.

This has been a worry for us for a long time and we have been in discussion with Wiltshire Council to address the safety issues already existing. This is before any further impact from the proposed Lime Down Solar Park.

The details of our concerns follow and I'd be grateful if you would take them into account in your deliberations. Our concerns focus primarily on active travellers whereas it appears the deliberations in the sessions seem to focus on two HGVs passing on this stretch. We are very troubled by suggestions that verges should be removed when these are the only places for pedestrians to jump onto to avoid danger.

Essentially we would like to address a significant road safety issue for pedestrians and cyclists on the section of road either side of the railway bridge to the north of the village. This three-quarter mile section provides the shortest, and in most cases, the only route for pedestrians between the following ten well used footpaths, tracks and entrances – also highlighted on the map below:

- Footpath HULL4
- The entrance track leading to the Flying Monk Café and Tap
- Footpath HULL5
- The entrance to Brookside housing
- The entrance to the cottages by the Old Railway Yard
- The permissive footpath to the immediate south of the railway bridge
- Footpath HULL29
- The track leading to footpaths HULL6 and HULL7
- Footpath HULL9
- Footpath HULL8

The problem

The problem is that walking here is unnecessarily scary and dangerous. People are reporting near miss impacts from passing vehicles while walking here and others are put off walking here because of the danger posed. The danger arises because:

- the road here has no footpaths or pavements;
- visibility is poor due to a series of road bends;
- the road is derestricted; and
- it is increasingly well used by drivers of heavy and light vehicles alike, many of which travel at high speed. It does seem a bit crazy that traffic can legally drive at super-fast speeds here past pedestrians and cyclists who have nowhere to escape. Also, even car drivers find it tricky joining this road at the T-junction from the village, where collisions have occurred.

Some details:

1) The verge that is referred to is the only means of getting off the road and out of the path of oncoming traffic. A resident has previously strimmed this in between cuts to enable walkers to be able to move out of the way of oncoming traffic, some of which driven at excessive speed.

2) The verge and the road are not a straight line and visibility is inhibited for foot traffic, particularly walking toward the village (foot traffic from the Tap etc). If the road is widened this would effectively decrease visibility further as pedestrians walk towards the village as oncoming vehicles would effectively out of sight.

3) Foot traffic is directly in contact with vehicles. To remove the verge to allow wider vehicles effectively makes the situation more dangerous and gives pedestrians nowhere to escape when confronted with vehicles.

4) In addition to the above, any proposed widening over a short stretch of road creates a further pinch point at the railway bridge. Obviously, this structure cannot be altered but would build in further risk as vehicles entering from the village side

would have to effectively move back over to the centre of the road and potentially into oncoming traffic. Large vehicles usually pass under the bridge in the centre of the road and come into conflict with traffic from Norton. Point 6 below addresses visibility.

5) There is already a pinch point at Brookside where the road narrows. At this point there are regular near misses and minor collisions together with a significant risk to pedestrians. The width of the Norton road at Brookside allows for two cars to slowly pass in opposite directions. If a larger vehicle is present, it currently forces one of the vehicles to pull into Brookside towards allow the oncoming traffic to pass.

6) As you either drive past Brookside or pull out of Brookside towards the village, visibility is very poor. To counter this, it is necessary to wind down car windows to listen for traffic coming from the village as there is no line of sight past Station Yard. The proposed widening of the road together with an additional pinch point will create a further hazard on an already hazardous road.

7) Whilst there has been discussion in relation to speed limits in the location due to risk and encountering pedestrians, the road is currently subject to national speed limits.

8) In addition to foot traffic, The Tap has built a successful client base of cyclists who regularly use the road. The proposal would place the cyclists at additional risk.

9) Any widening will lead to traffic going faster than they do already, just increasing the hazards on this stretch for active travellers.

Please **remember** our residents when considering this route and the dangers to them.

Kind regards



Chair, on behalf of Hullavington Parish Council

